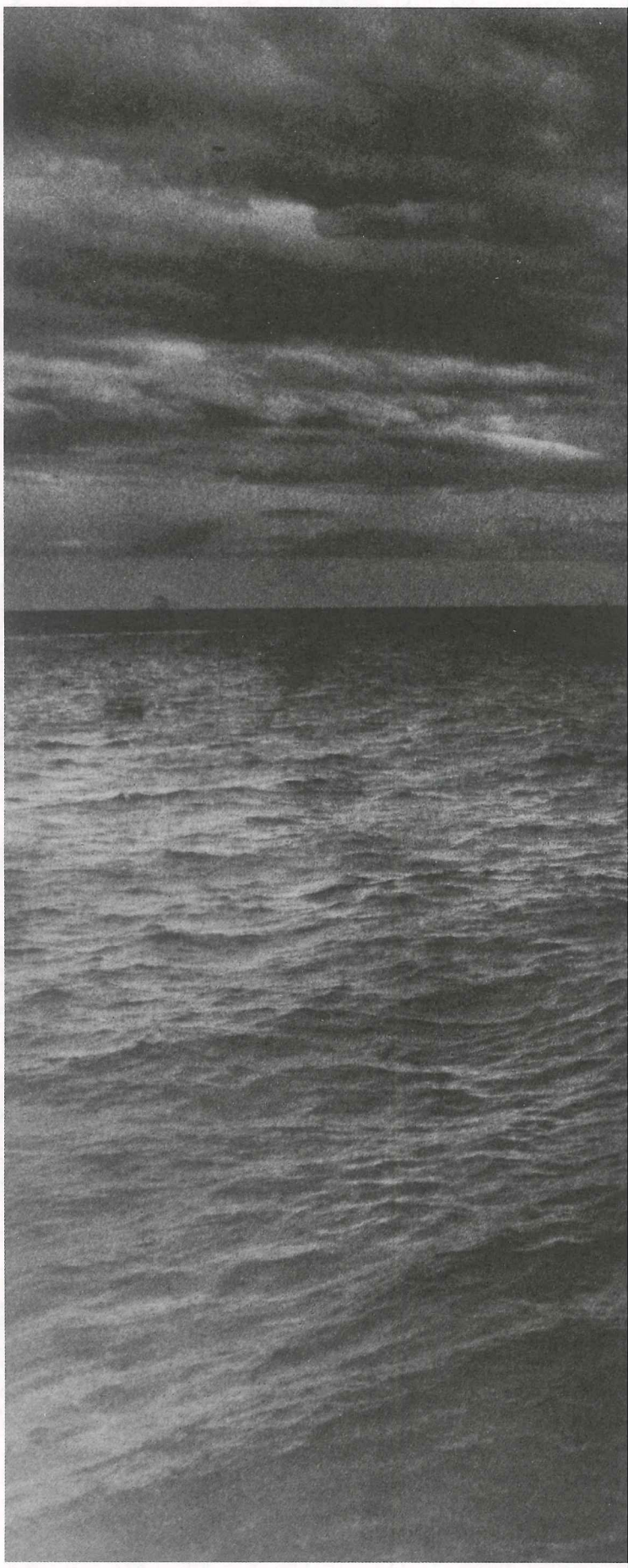
Nakahira Takuma

中平卓馬
なかひら たくま

The value of one photograph
entirely depends
on how that
photographer has lived.

— Nakahira Takuma



Nakahira Takuma,
'For a Language to Come', 1970
© Gen Nakahira.
Courtesy of Each Modern Gallery, Taipei

一張照片的價值完全在於那位攝影家曾怎樣的活過——中平卓馬

Nakahira Takuma was born in Tokyo in 1938. In his youth, he attended the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Department of Spanish, and was an avid lover of literature and film. In 1940, during the student-led demonstrations against the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan, Nakahira was the leader of Zengakuren, All-Japan League of Student Self-Government. He took part in various resistance movements, and even sent a letter to Fidel Castro to offer support to the Cuban Revolution. After graduation, Nakahira Takuma worked as a part-time translator; he later joined the new leftist magazine *Gendai no Me* (Contemporary Eye) as an editor, marking the beginning of his relationship with images.

It was Tomatsu Shomei who suggested that Nakahira add a photography section to *Gendai no Me*, and also encouraged him to produce his own photographic works. In 1965, Nakahira made the decision to pursue a career as a photography artist: "Theory in the left hand, art in the right hand" would encapsulate the lifelong creative vision of this central figure in Japanese photography.

At the initiative of Tomatsu Shomei as well, Nakahira Takuma and Taki Koji served on the exhibition committee of "Photography 100 Years: A History of Photographic Expressions of the Japanese" between 1965 and 1968. The exhibition was a retrospective on Japanese photography from the introduction of photography into the country in 1840 to the defeat in the war in 1945. Nakahira reviewed more than 100,000 photographs, which brought to his mind the fundamental question: What is photography?

This led Nakahira to co-found the photography *dojin-shi* (self-published magazine) *PROVOKE* with Yutaka Takanashi and Taki Koji in 1968, with Moriyama Daido also joining from the second issue. Subtitled "Provocative Materials for Thought", *PROVOKE* championed that photography was not a medium of disseminating information or answers, but an interrogation in pursuit of authenticity. The collective's *are, bure, boke* (grainy, blurry, out of focus) visual style had a tremendous impact on the Japanese photographic art circle.

However, the *PROVOKE* collective disbanded two years later after the publication of *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-Certainty* in March 1970. In the same year, Nakahira published *For a Language to Come* and in the following year, participated in the Paris Biennale for emerging artists with 'Circulation: Date, Place, Events'.

As riots broke out in Okinawa in November 1971, a youth was falsely charged with murder of a police officer over what was presumed to be photographic evidence. Nakahira Takuma came to the realisation that photography in itself was only a body of fragments with the power to instigate, and he gave up photography for a few years afterwards.

In 1973, Nakahira published the collection of essays *Why an Illustrated Botanical Dictionary?* in which he rejected the poetic expression in his previous works; he burned most of his prints and negatives by the sea in Zushi. In 1976, his collaborative work with Shinoyama Kishin, *Duel on Photography*, was serialised in *Asahi Camera*, which reignited his passion for photography. Then, in an unexpected turn of events, shortly before the publication of *Duel on Photography* in book form in the following year, Nakahira suffered acute alcohol poisoning with traumatic memory loss and aphasia. He recovered and began taking photographs again, doing so until his long-term hospitalisation in 2012. He passed away in September 2015.

As the most provocative contemporary photographic artist, Nakahira was driven by his ceaseless reflections on photography: it propelled his lifelong exploration into the extremity of images, an exploration that can be marked by four distinct phases.

At the invitation of the Hong Kong International Photo Festival, I have curated this solo exhibition of work by Nakahira Takuma, presented at HART Projects @ H Code. On one floor, projections of *For a Language to Come* fills the entire exhibition space, and Nakahira's books from the different phases of his creative practice are on exhibit. Presented on a second floor is a chronological showcase of selected works, such as 'Circulation: Date, Place, Events', 'Overflow', and his colour photography from later years. The entire exhibition display is set up as an overview of his photographic practice and thinking; it seeks to offer a coherent portrayal of Nakahira's ambitions that propelled his involvement in the experimental photography magazine *PROVOKE* in the first place—to present "Provocative Materials for Thought".

Nakahira Takuma, 'For a Language to Come', 1970 © Gen Nakahira
Courtesy of Each Modern, Taipei

Nakahira Takuma, 'Overflow', 1974 © Gen Nakahira
Courtesy of Each Modern, Taipei

Curatorial Statement By Huang Yaji

Nakahira Takuma: The Extremity of Images

中平卓馬，一九三八年生於東京。青年時期的中平卓馬進入東京外國語大學西班牙語學系就讀，熱衷文學和電影。一九六〇年安保鬥爭（日本左派和學運發動的反對美日安保條約運動），中平卓馬是學生自治會領袖，參與各種抗爭運動，甚至曾親自寫信給卡斯特羅支持古巴革命。畢業後，中平卓馬先兼職翻譯撰稿工作，後進入新左翼刊物《現代之眼》擔任編輯，並開始他與影像的關係：在東松照明的建議下，中平卓馬於雜誌內開設攝影專頁，並同時在東松的鼓勵下開始拍照，一九六五年決心走向攝影家之路。「左手理論，右手創作」，是這位日本攝影界最重要的人物畢生創作的核心。

在東松照明召集下，自一九六五到一九六八年期間，中平卓馬和多木浩二擔任「攝影一百年——日本人攝影表現的歷史」展覽委員，此展回顧攝影傳入的一八四〇年至戰敗一九四五年的日本攝影，中平研究超過十萬張照片，心中開始萌生「攝影究竟是什麼？」這個根本問題。

也因此，一九六八年中平決定與高梨豐、多木浩二創辦攝影同人雜誌《PROVOKE》（挑釁），森山大道並於第二期加入。《PROVOKE》的口號為「致思考的挑釁性素材」，認為攝影並非傳達資訊或是解答的媒體，而是追求真實的質問，他們「粗劣．搖晃．失焦」的影像風格帶給日本攝影界極大衝擊。

然而，兩年之後，《PROVOKE》在一九七〇年三月結集出版《先把正確的世界丟棄吧》後解散，同年中平卓馬出版《為了該有的語言》（*For a languauge to come*），隔年以「循環：日期、場所、行為」參加巴黎青年雙年展。

一九七一年十一月，沖繩發生暴動，一名青年因照片遭誣控謀殺警察，讓中平卓馬覺悟攝影本身不過是充滿教唆權力的斷片，之後有幾年時間放棄拍照。

一九七三年中平發表評論集《為何是植物圖鑑》，否定自己過去的詩意表現，並在逗子海邊燒毀作品與底片。一九七六年他與篠山紀信於《朝日相機》共同連載〈決鬥寫真論〉重燃攝影慾望，但沒想到翌年《決鬥寫真論》集結出版前日，中平卻因酒精中毒而喪失記憶與邏輯能力。他在休養後復出拍照，直至二〇一二年長期住院，最終於二〇一五年九月過世。

作為當代最具挑發性的攝影創作者，中平卓馬因對攝影持續的反思，終其一生不間探索影像的極限，且具明顯的階段性。

此次受邀於香港國際攝影節策劃中平卓馬個展，於展場 HART Projects @ H Code 的三樓及五樓舉行：三樓將呈現以《為了該有的語言》的影像所環繞的空間，並提供中平卓馬各時期的出版書籍作為參考；五樓將依時序展開中平過往展覽作品〈Circulation: Date, Place, Events〉（循環：日期、場所、行為）〈Overflow〉（氾濫）與其晚年的彩色作品。整體以其攝影實踐與思考的時間線索進行策劃及設置，完整呈現中平卓馬參與實驗性攝影雜誌《PROVOKE》的初衷——「致思考的挑釁性素材」。

策展人語 黃亞紀 撰

中平卓馬 影像的極限

3F From *PROVOKE* to *For a Language to Come* (1968-1970)

In 1968, *PROVOKE* opened up new dimensions for photography in the spheres of imagery, meaning and politics. In the essay, "At the Limits of the Gaze", Franz Prichard notes:

"That Nakahira's work was at times grainy, blurry, and out of focus was not simply an assertion of an authorial intent to forge a new photographic style. Desperate to capture a radically transforming world, the photographs were merely the by-product of his provocations between the camera and the fluid contours of his urban subject. This subject was, in fact, the intensive urbanization of Japan during the 1960s and '70s that would effectively redraw the nation's social and political contours." [1]

Should *PROVOKE* be considered a product of its time? It was, in a certain sense.

The year 1968 was a time of turbulence and frenzy fuelled by the occupation of Yasuda Auditorium by The University of Tokyo students, the campaign against the American occupation of Japan, and the anti-Vietnam War movement. There was also an excess of images that stemmed from the connotations of society and witness at the time.

Under these circumstances, Nakahira Takuma was particularly conscious of the political and philosophical detonations that were encompassed in one's thinking. He also sought to awaken thinking and language with photography—to render in visuals the language that failed to capture fragments of reality. [2]

Did the photography championed by *PROVOKE* shake language awake in the end? Nakahira Takuma's answer was negative. [3]

The photobook Nakahira Takuma produced around this time, *For a Language to Come*, is akin to the Book of Revelation for photography. On a tangible level, the desolate nights portrayed in the book evoke the fragmented relationships that underpinned Japan's politics, economy and cultural ecology at the time. The intangible, powerful force in Nakahira's instinctive response, however, is indirect proof that it is impossible to explain any photograph with language—language bounces off the photograph, leaving behind only what exists between the camera and the ever-shifting metropolitan subject.

This left Nakahira Takuma in a state of deep confusion. Although he had achieved the dissolution of meaning, another kind of meaning had emerged from images, and it was one that denoted a certain stylistic or decorative value—*PROVOKE* came to an end.

Yet 50 years later, *PROVOKE* is the most important starting point for examining the history of contemporary Japanese photography. In recent years, there have been two major exhibitions of contemporary Japanese art in Europe and the US: "Provoke: Photography in Japan between Protest and Performance, 1960-75" and "For a New World to Come: Experiments in Japanese Art and Photography".

Both exhibitions were centred around Nakahira Takuma and *PROVOKE*; in particular, the title of the latter exhibition was clearly intended as a tribute to *For a Language to Come*.

Nakahira Takuma, 'For a Language to Come', 1970 © Gen Nakahira
Courtesy of Each Modern, Taipei

3F/5F

HART Projects @ H Code

3F 從《挑釁》到《為了該有的語言》（一九六八—一九七〇）

一九六八年，《PROVOKE》開啟攝影在影像、意義、政治上的新維度。「中平卓馬的影像中不時出現的粗劣、模糊、失焦，並非個人意圖自成一套嶄新的攝影風格，他渴望捕捉的是眼前激烈鉅變的世界，因此，照片只不過是他的相機和輪廓起伏流動的都會主體之間，經由本能反應而生成的副產品。他的攝影主體，是一九六〇、七〇年代正值密集都市化的日本。此一階段的變革，幾乎重劃了國家整體的社會與政治輪廓。」[1]

《PROVOKE》究竟是否應視為時代的產物？在某種意義下是的。

「濃烈的一九六八年因全共鬥、反美軍佔領，以及反越戰而處於亢奮狀態，影像也因社會與目擊的意義而處於氾濫狀態。

在這樣背景下，中平卓馬特別在乎思想所包含的政治性或哲學性指涉，且企圖以攝影讓思想與語言復活——為無法捕捉現實片段的語言加以視覺化。」[2]

但最後《PROVOKE》提倡的攝影真的讓語言復活了嗎？中平卓馬的回答是否定的。」[3]

中平卓馬此時留下的攝影集《為了該有的語言》，就像一本攝影最終的默示錄，它形而下那荒蕪般夜的世界，是當時日本在政治、經濟、文化生態上所隱藏的破碎關係，而形而上那強烈衝擊的力道，也就是中平卓馬經由本能反應而生的影像，反證了任何照片都不是語言可單純說明的——語言從照片的表面彈開，只留下相機和起伏流動的都會主體之間的存在。

中平卓馬對此感到非常迷惘，儘管他達到了讓意義崩解，影像卻另造就了另一種意義，且是關於風格、裝飾這類價值判斷——《PROVOKE》結束了。

然而，五十年後的今天，《PROVOKE》卻是歐美研究日本當代攝影史最重要的起始點：近年歐美兩個重要的日本當代藝術大展，分別是「挑釁：一九六〇—七五年介於抗爭與表演的日本攝影」（Provoke: Photography in Japan between Protest and Performance, 1960–75）及「為了該有的新世界：一九六八—七九年日本藝術和攝影實驗」（For a New World to Come: Experiments in Japanese Art and Photography, 1968–1979）。

兩者皆把中平卓馬與《PROVOKE》作為展覽重心，尤其後者展名明顯地在向《為了該有的語言》致敬。

5F *Circulation* (1971), *Overflow* (1974) and the colour series (2003-2015)

Although *PROVOKE* revolutionised post-war Japanese photography and went on to influence countless artists of subsequent generations, Nakahira Takuma gradually renounced its grainy, blurry, out-of-focus photographic style that he had become known for. A sensitive and deeply introspective person, he set out to propose new photographic theories and methodologies in the 1970s.

"Nakahira Takuma was keenly aware of the changing times propelled by the explosion of the consumerist society and informationised society. The consumption of images subverted the relationship between originals and duplicates, leading to the detachment of images from reality and their deification. As [photography] was transposed to the audience through the mass media, the physical character of photography as a medium of documentation turned into a kind of social myth, where all photographic records were presumed to be true. Politics permeated the everyday, and visual and photography practitioners were co-opted into this institutionalised habit of reproducing resemblance to reality." [4]

Nakahira Takuma felt that photography had pushed reality further away and fell to the nadir of his artistic practice. For Nakahira Takuma, both a thinker and a photographer, there often existed an intricate dynamic between text and image: they complemented yet also undermined each other. During this period, Nakahira almost gave up taking photographs

completely, except for his work 'Circulation: Date, Place, Events' during the Paris Biennale for emerging artists in 1971.

Rather than send existing photographs to Paris, Nakahira Takuma wished to create something "live" at the Biennale: he decided to photograph his routes through the streets of Paris for one week. Every evening, he quickly developed the negatives and made the prints; he then glued the prints to the wall inside the Biennale hall for the showcase on the following day.

For Nakahira Takuma, 'Circulation' meant his movements around Paris, including his route from darkroom to display, and the reaction to his work from visitors perambulating the display. After one week, the lengthy wall was covered with nearly 600 photographs. Further photographs were laid on the floor and the desk.

'Circulation: Date, Place, Events' transformed photography into performing art. It embodied a refusal to portray the world from a subjective point of view, pointing to the idea that images were "mere *remnants*" of reality. [5]

Matthew S. Witkovsky, Curator of the Department of Photography at The Art of Institute of Chicago, notes the significance of 'Circulation':

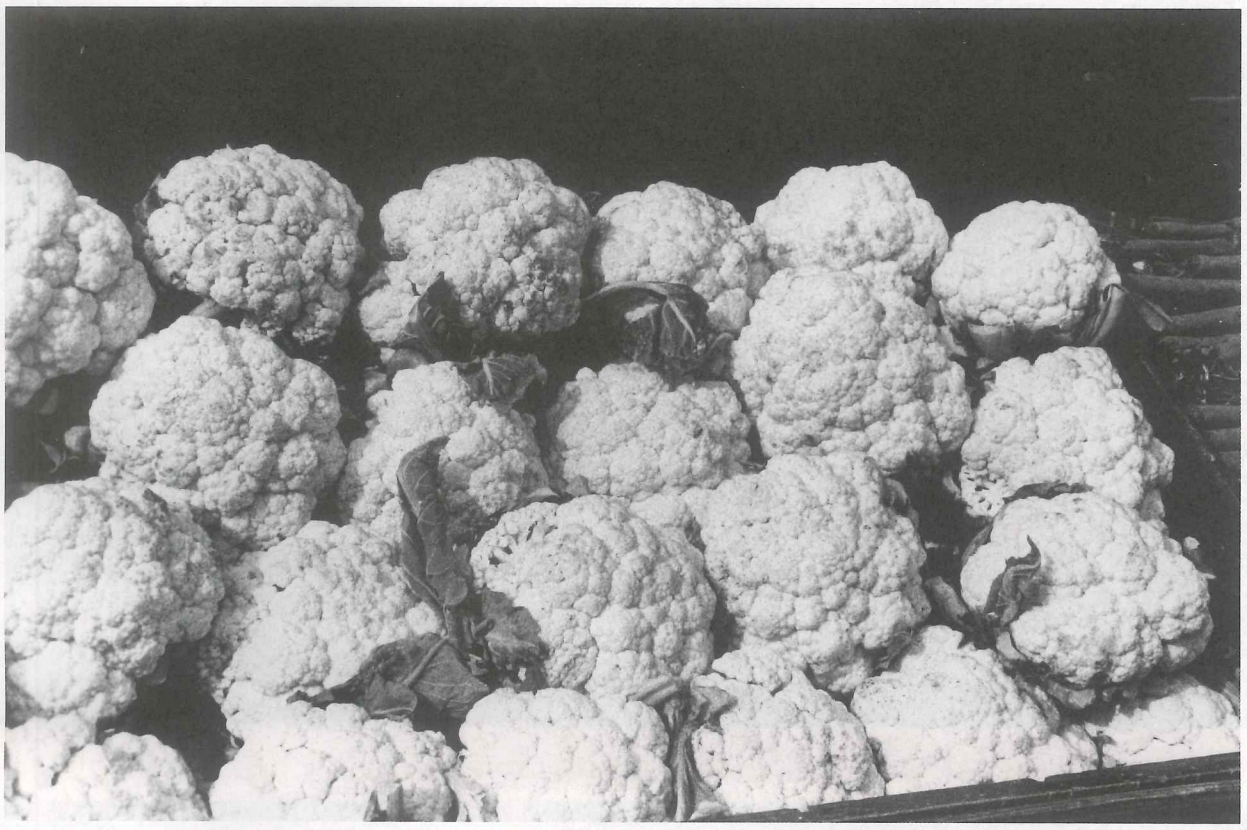
"The perishability of the prints in 'Circulation' marks a singular attempt to analyse reality through its traces without memorializing it. Apparently aimless, this daily circulation in fact summed up the city and the moment in a way that no fixing of photographs in a book or in frames could possibly have done." [6]

While Nakahira re-examined and questioned his works from the *PROVOKE* era, he began to publish works of colour photography in magazines (mainly in *Asahi Journal*). In each feature, the photographs of disjointed scenes were accompanied by a short text. The images resounded with the sense of restlessness that marked the modern metropolis, and they were woven from fragmented facets of urban reality—amidst the proliferation of urbanscapes, the boundaries between the urban and the rural, humans and nature, reality and fiction had disintegrated. In 1974, Nakahira was invited to participate in the "15 Photographers Today" exhibition at the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo. He selected 48 images from this period to create Overflow, a wall-mounted installation, six metres wide. The work was subsequently collected by the Museum.

Overflow may be an unnerving encounter for some viewers. In these images that illuminate the dim crevices of the city—a space overflowing with commodities, information and material things—the photographed objects seem at once too ordinary and too peculiar. *Overflow* features a photomontage of 48 horizontal and vertical colour images, revealing urban scenery in which the "human" is largely absent (or only present in phantom-like traces). It challenges the viewers' modes of interpreting the familiar. Nakahira published an essay titled "Can an Anarchist Become an Architect?" at the time of the creation of 'Overflow': "The urban is something that encompasses me, something synonymous with a history that continuously violates me. The urban is something that always exceeds my grasp, something opaque, yet something certainly existing, a totality of invisible relations." [7]

'Overflow' may be considered the culmination of Nakahira's thinking about radical urban forms given tangible expression through photographic act, as well as a continuation of *PROVOKE* on some levels. A point of note is that Overflow also has its echoes in the book *Why the Botanical Encyclopaedia?*. As Franz K. Prichard remarks, "'Overflow' compels us as viewers to see the interplay of a seemingly random distribution of fragments, surfaces and residues. And in so doing, we are made to sense the undifferentiated enumeration of parts of an incomplete whole. This is, if you recall, the definition of the 'illustrated dictionary' form that Nakahira provided in the essay 'Why an Illustrated Botanical Dictionary?'" [8]

In 1973, Nakahira Takuma published *Why an Illustrated Botanical Dictionary?*, a book that recapitulates his vision as a thinker. The book includes Nakahira's reflections and self-examinations of his approach to photography, and his social commentaries previously published in magazines and newspapers. Most importantly, *Why an Illustrated Botanical Dictionary?* illustrates Nakahira Takuma of the next phase: He rejected wholesale the "lyricism" and "meanings" in photography and sought to work in accordance with his *Botanical Dictionary*. Meanwhile, he destroyed all the notes, prints and negatives from the first phase (*PROVOKE—For a Language to Come*) of his creative practice.



Nakahira Takuma, 'Circulation: Dates, Place, Events', 1971 © Gen Nakahira.
Courtesy of Each Modern Gallery, Taipei

5 F 從〈循環〉(一九七一)〈氾濫〉(一九七四)到彩色系列(二〇〇三—二〇一五)

由上述可知，《PROVOKE》改變了戰後日本攝影的面貌，並影響了無數的後進創作者。即便如此，敏感而充滿自省的中平卓馬卻在不久之後，即一九七〇年代，逐步棄絕自身以粗劣、搖晃、失焦聞名的攝影風格，並嘗試提出嶄新的影像論述與攝影實踐方法論。中平認識到，攝影反而將現實世界推得更遠，他陷入了創作的低潮：

「中平敏銳地感受到大眾消費社會、資訊化社會的膨脹帶來的時代變遷。圖像的消費逆轉了原創與複製的關係，招致影像自現實游離並且被神化的狀況，攝影本來作為記錄工具的物理性格，透過大眾媒體傳送到受眾手上的過程，反過來變成一種社會性神話，以為所有被拍攝下來的東西都是真實的。政治深刻地滲透日常生活，圖像和攝影工作者自己都被收編到擬似現實的再生產系統當中。」[4]

因此，身兼思想家與攝影家的中平卓馬，文字與影像經常是互相消長的狀態。這期間的中平卓馬幾乎停止拍照，只有一九七一年赴巴黎參加青年雙年展期間，創作了〈循環：日期、場所、行為〉(Circulation: Date, Place, Events)。

與其將現有的照片寄到巴黎參展，中平卓馬希望在雙年展中創造一個「現場」：他決定在一星期內，每天漫步巴黎街道拍照，晚上迅速沖洗他的底片與照片，然後隔天黏合在雙年展大廳牆上。

對中平卓馬來說，「循環」意味著他在巴黎各處的活動，包括他從暗房到會場的路徑，以及會場中路過觀者對他作品的反應。一星期後，長牆被近乎六百張的照片覆蓋，另有照片在地板上、書桌上。

「〈循環：日期、場所、行為〉將攝影轉化為表演藝術，並拒絕從個人立場出發來描繪世界，認為影像不過是現實的「殘渣」罷了。」[5]

芝加哥藝術博物館(The Art Institute of Chicago)策展人維特科夫斯基(Matthew S. Witkovsky)如此推崇〈循環〉的重要性：

「〈循環〉當中影像的易朽性，呈現一種不經過記憶，而僅透過痕跡來分析現實的意圖。或許一切毫無意義，但此種透過日常循環呈現一座城市，乃至於一時片刻的方式，是任何攝影集或表框過的照片，都不可能辦到的。」[6]

就在中平卓馬對《PROVOKE》時期的影像抱持懷疑時，他開始在雜誌(多數是《Asahi Journal》)發表彩色作品，每次刊登一些非連貫的破碎畫面，伴隨短文。這些曖昧的畫面，擷取自都市的現實面貌——不斷膨脹的都市，顛覆了城市與鄉村、人與自然、現實與虛構的邊界，充滿著似乎稱為「現代城市基調」的不安。一九七四年，中平卓馬獲邀參與東京國立近代美術館的展覽「十五位當今攝影師」，他選取了共四十八張這段期間的創作，組成長達六米的攝影裝置〈氾濫〉，作品並獲得東京國立近代美術館收藏。

觀看〈氾濫〉會是一個緊張的體驗。這些照片顯示了一個城市的裂縫，在充滿物質、商品與資訊的空間中，這些被攝的事物看起來太過平凡卻又過於異常。〈氾濫〉以水平垂直格重組四十八張彩色照片，呈現大量「人」的缺席(即使存在，也如同鬼魅一般)的都市場景，挑戰觀者對眼前熟識的視覺的理解方式。根據普里查德的研究，就在創作〈氾濫〉作品的同時，中平卓馬發表了一篇名為〈無政府主義者可以成為建築師嗎?〉的文章：「城市是一個包覆我全身的東西，一個與不斷侵犯我的歷史同義的東西。城市永遠超越我的認知，它模糊曖昧，但又確實存在。它是一個隱形關係的整體。」[7]

〈氾濫〉可以說是中平將其對激進的都會形式的思想，透過攝影方式加以實體化的成果，而且可視為《PROVOKE》的某種延續，又承接了後來的《為何是植物圖鑑》——這是非常重要的一點。普里查德評論道：「〈氾濫〉迫使我們作為觀眾，看到看似隨機分佈的碎片，表面和殘留物的相互作用。在這樣做的過程中，我們可以感受到一個不完整整體部分的無差別列舉。如果你還記得，那就是中平卓馬在文章「為何是植物圖鑑?」中提供的『圖鑑』形式的定義。」[8]

一九七三年，中平卓馬出版《為何是植物圖鑑》，這本書是作為思想家中平卓馬的結晶。書中並不只討論自身對於攝影的態度與剖析，還包括回應當時社會動態而發表於雜誌或報紙等傳媒上的文章。但是最重要的，《為何是植物圖鑑》說明了下一階段的中平卓馬：全面否定影像的「詩意」與「意象」，展開等同「植物圖鑑」的新工作。同時，他燒毀了所有他第一階段(從《挑釁》到《為了該有的語言》)的筆記、照片、底片。

Nakahira Takuma, 'Circulation: Dates, Place, Events', 1971 © Gen Nakahira
Courtesy of Each Modern Gallery, Taipei

Enrégistreur automatique

There are certain reasons for Nakahira Takuma's relative anonymity in the international photographic art circle. The first is the loss of his early works; the second is the interruptions in his creative practice between 1970 and the early 1980s, a decade marked by three turns of events.

Firstly, Nakahira was focused more on examining photographic theories and devoted less and less energy to producing his own images. Secondly, his trip to Okinawa in 1971 in support of the "Matsunaga Incident" [9] further prolonged his search for a new direction in photography. Lastly, Nakahira suffered acute alcohol poisoning in 1977, resulting in traumatic memory loss and aphasia. His only work from this period (1974-1989) is *Duel on Photography*, a collaboration with Shinoyama Kishin.

The serialisation of *Duel on Photography* reignited the creative desire in Nakahira Takuma, lifting him from his disillusionment with photography. In an ironic twist, he became ill shortly before the book publication of *Duel on Photography* and fell into an intense distress.

Starting in the early 1980s, Nakahira Takuma cycled to the areas around Yokohama and Kawasaki almost every day; at times, he even travelled to Tokyo to take photographs. In the same vein as the creation of 'Circulation', he would go into the darkroom at dusk to process the negatives, select the images he wanted and then make the prints. In scrutinising his vision over and over, Nakahira Takuma was constantly experiencing a unique intellectual shock. It led him to a new understanding of photography: while photography and the so-called photographic act were only superficial imitations of society, they could become the means through which society was exposed, if pushed to the extreme (or the zero degree).

This change is illustrated in *A New Gaze* published in 1983. Following *A New Gaze*, Nakahira Takuma published other photobooks, including *Adieu à X* (1989) and *Hysteric Six: Nakahira Takuma* (2002). He began to experiment with direct, unemotional ways of viewing and photographing that broke free from the notion of "I", and this approach culminated in the vertical colour photographs in his oeuvre. These colour images may encapsulate Nakahira Takuma's art in its purest; they are also the most difficult series to decipher among his works.

The photographs revolve around the following subjects: fire, water, birds, animals, trees, home, and people, all of which were regular presences in Nakahira Takuma's everyday life. For this reason, some critics have called these works by Nakahira Takuma the new "I-Photography".

However, these recurring objects and fragments were shot with a photographic approach devoid of metaphor, rhetoric, or style of expression, endowing them with an almost tactile texture, rich tones, sharp contrast, and distinct contours. They exist in the form of still objects, in a state of absolute purity.

This is vastly different from the images of "I-Photography" that are filled with memories, narratives and feelings. On the nature of Nakahira's photographic approach, Shimizu Minoru sums it up in a much more concise explanation:

> Photography transforms all regular nouns into proper nouns; it turns everything that exists into "this (one)", and all that exists in "this (one)" (haecceity, the individuality of existence) is equivalent. That is, "this is a cat" is how it is defined in human perception, yet it turns into "the cat is this" in the photographic perception. "The homeless man is this" and "the bird is this"—the homeless man is equated with the bird. Therefore, photography is a world in which all human distinctions vanish, leaving behind only the pure equivalent of "this (one)" and its recurring existence.
>
> The world of photography is one of insanity. Nakahira Takuma is the purest photographer in contemporary photo-graphy. His work points to the "zero degree" of photography, which is the singular haecceity of proper nouns and its equivalent. Nakahira's photography puts to shame most photographers who are preoccupied with naming or expounding on their works. [10]

In terms of artistic development, Moriyama Daido believed Nakahira Takuma had set himself free from the constraints of the external world and arrived at his own sanctuary:

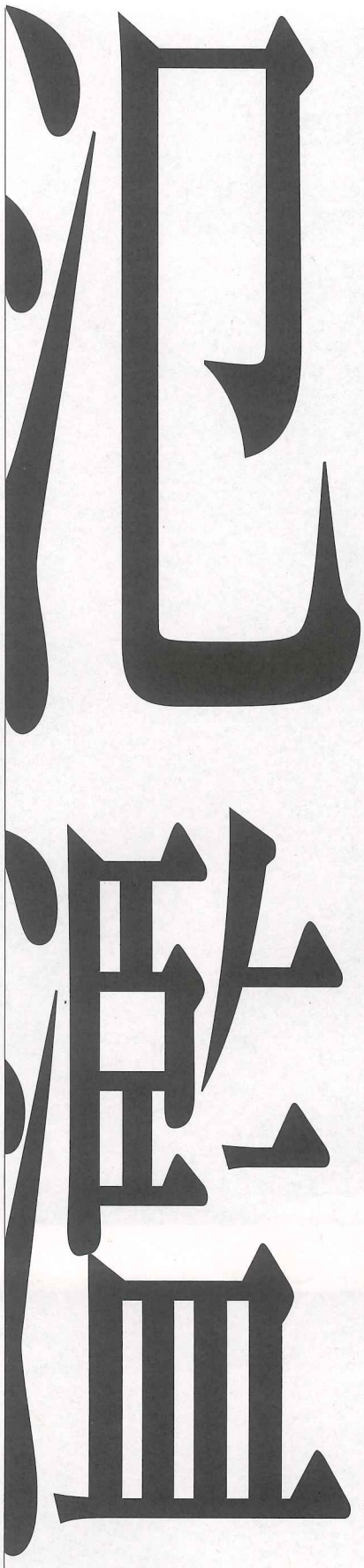
> His arrival at these lucid, colour works was absolutely not a result of his memory loss. It was something he had believed in and been ready to undertake at that point in time. He began from that starting point. Nakahira Takuma was heading towards an encyclopaedia-like world with no room for aesthetics and feelings, something that synchronised with the photography he was pursuing.... At one point, Nakahira Takuma often spoke of the term "anarcho individual". By now, he has attained a totally autonomous "individuality" or even transcended this "individuality", as he has claimed "the world of encyclo-paedia"—he has become the vocabulary he reveres. [11]

Nakahira moves from night to day, from B/W to colour, from ambiguity to clarity – beginning with 'Overflow', he gradually developed a distinct colour sensibility in his work—a process that took him almost 20 years to complete because of health issues. Throughout his life, Nakahira Takuma engaged himself in relentless questioning about images, language and meaning. In the end, his thinking and photographic practice culminated in colour photography that exemplifies the creation of "a viewpoint devoid of subjectivity". This stands in contrast with the directions of most photography practitioners or theories on photography—particularly among the mainstream perspectives in the West.

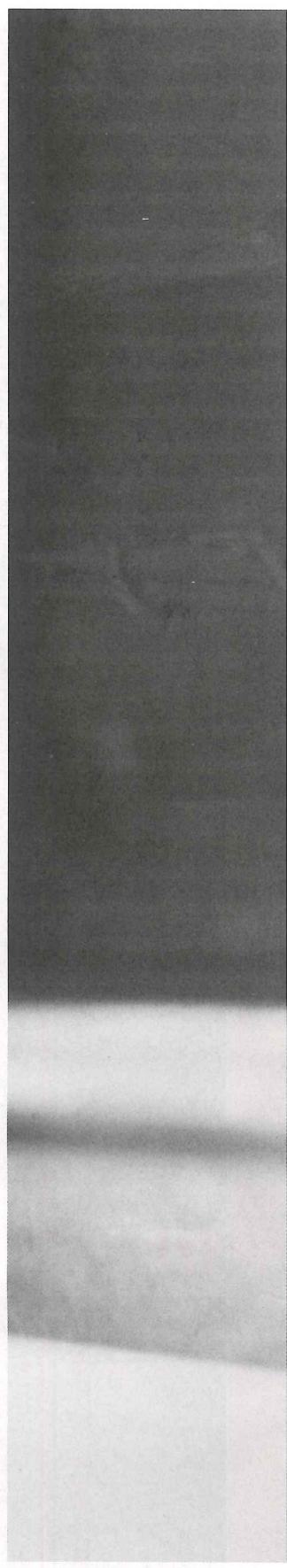
Photography has always been used as a tool to create reasons for existence (of the photographer or the photo-graphic subject), and the meaning of an image is derived from the appearance of things: the more expressive an image, the more ambiguity it contains. Yet Nakahira Takuma's colour photography cuts away the ambiguity of all superficiality, meaning, and time, and reaches the extremity of photographic purity that may be accessible from human perspectives.

While internationally, many photographers, curators and critics choose to present and discuss Nakahira's B/W images and his life with *PROVOKE*, I choose Nakahira's colour world. ◉

(This article is revised and expanded from "Nakahira Taku-ma: The Extremity of Images" by Huang Yaji, published in *Chinese Photography*, March 2017.)



Nakahira Takuma, 'Overflow', 1974
© Gen Nakahira
Courtesy of Each Modern, Taipei



1. Prichard, Franz. "At the Limits of the Gaze". Aperture, vol.219.
2. Nakahira, Takuma. "Has photography been able to revive language?". Why an Illustrated Botanical Dictionary? (In Chinese) Translated into Chinese by Wu Jiwen. Faces Publishing. English translation by Nicolette Wong.
3. Nakahira, Takuma. "Has photography been able to provoke language?". Why an Illustrated Botanical Dictionary? (In Chinese) Translated into Chinese by Wu Jiwen. Faces Publishing. English translation by Nicolette Wong.
4. Yasumi, Akihito. "The Ethnics of Judgment?". Why an Illustrated Botanical Dictionary? (In Chinese) Translated into Chinese by Wu Jiwen. Faces Publishing. English translation by Nicolette Wong.
5. Witkovsky, Matthew S.. "Nakahira's Circulation". Aperture, vol.219.
6. Ibid.
7. Prichard, Franz K.. "An Illustrated Dictionary of Urban Overflows: Takuma Nakahira's Photographic Thought and Practice". Overflow. Tokyo: Case Publishing, 2018.
8. Ibid.
9. The workers' strike against the Okinawa Reversion Agreement and the ensuing clash in Okinawa on 10 November 1971. A police officer died during the clash, with a young dyer named Matsunaga Aizome alleged to be involved in the death and arrested. The sole evidence presented by the police was two photographs published in the newspaper Yomiuri Shinbun that accompanied an article entitled "Thrashing by the radicals, Police officer burned alive," in which Matsunaga was accused of beating the police officer to death. According to an eye-witness's account, however, the youth was attempting to help the officer. The two different interpretations led Nakahira to contemplate the logic trap in the notion that "photographic records are reality" – he also questioned the intricate power structure between photography and politics. Nakahira advocated self-awareness among photography practitioners and that images not end up as a form of policing power.
10. Shimizu, Minoru. "Naked Photography—Nakahira Takuma". Art-it.asia, 2011. Translated into Chinese by Huang Yaji. English translation by Nicolette Wong.
11. Moriyama, Daido. "Why talk about Nakahira Takuma now". Takuma Nakahira: Degree Zero – Yokohama, 2003. Translated into Chinese by Huang Yaji. English translation by Nicolette Wong

About the Author: Born in Taipei in 1976, HUANG Yaji is the owner of the gallery, Each Modern. Formerly aura gallery taipei, from 2014 to 2017, Each Modern is committed to inventive art forms and fostering international dialogue by bringing to light the uniqueness of each artist's practice. A pivotal player in Taiwan's art world, the gallery focuses on the avant-garde, emerging and mid-career contemporary artists from China and Taiwan, and international photo-graphers. Prior to being a gallerist, Huang was an indepen-dent writer and curator.

關於作者：黃亞紀，一九七六年生於台北，亞紀畫廊主理人。前身是亦安畫廊（台北，二〇一四—二〇一七）的亞紀畫廊，旨在通過展現藝術家的獨特性創作，以此推廣跨地區性藝術形式與對話。作為台灣藝術界地位舉足輕重的亞紀畫廊，其眼光聚焦於中國內地與台灣本土創作前衛的中堅力量和新勢力影像創作，同時包括國際級攝影大師作品。在經營畫廊之前，黃亞紀是一名獨立評論家與策展人。

Each Modern https://eachmodern.com

從夜晚到白晝，從黑白到彩色，從曖昧到明快。從《氾濫》開始，中平卓馬逐漸發展往另一種的彩色風格——儘管這個發展卻因身體的種種因素，花費了幾乎二十年的時間才算完成。中平卓馬終其一生都在向影像、語言、意義提出質問。他的思想與攝影實踐，最終以彩色攝影具體示範了一種不具任何主觀意識的兩線如何形成的過程，這與多數攝影者或攝影理論的方向——去其西方主流攝影觀點大相逕庭。

攝影向來被作為賦予存在理由（無論是攝影者或是被攝體）的工具，照片的意義亦由事物外貌的引用而來：越表現豐富的照片，越富有曖昧不明的意義。但中平卓馬完成的彩色攝影，卻把一切表面、意義、時間的曖昧延伸切斷，到達從人類角度而言可能達到純粹攝影的極限。這也是為什麼當目前國際對中平卓馬的評價仍停留在《PROVOKE》與黑白時期時，但我與其他策展人更著力於介紹他的彩色攝影的原因。◉

他之所以到達現在明晰的彩色作品，絕對不是因昏倒喪失記憶所獲得的，而是在那個時間點，他早已確信而準備展開的東西。然後從那個出發點開始，中平卓馬向著毫無美學或情緒的餘地，宛如圖鑑般的世界，與他追求的攝影直接一氣呵成的東西。……中平卓馬曾常把「無政府主義的個人（anarcho individual）」一詞放在嘴邊。現在，他已取得徹底獨立的「個體」，甚至超越「個體」，也就是獲得「圖鑑的世界」——他已經完全成為他自己所推崇的詞彙。[11]

（本篇文章改寫擴充自〈中平卓馬：影像的極限〉，黃亞紀著，《中國攝影》二〇一七年三月號）

1 〈邊界的極限〉，普里查德（Franz Prichard）著，《Aperture》vol.219，翻譯：李依潔。
2 〈攝影可以置諸言語後活動？〉，中平卓馬著，《為何是植物圖鑑》，翻譯：吳繼文，麥田出版社。
3 〈攝影是以能檢文字嗎？〉，中平卓馬著，《為何是植物圖鑑》，翻譯：吳繼文，麥田出版社。
4 〈幽冥的倫理〉，八角監仁著，《為何是植物圖鑑》，翻譯：吳繼文，麥田出版社。
5 〈中平的循環〉，維特科夫斯基著，《Aperture》vol.219，翻譯：李依潔。
6 同上。
7 〈邊界的極限〉，普里查德（Franz Prichard）著，《Aperture》vol.219，翻譯：李依潔。
8 同上。
9 一九七一年十月十日，沖繩發生因不滿美日共同發表協議內容發起罷工衝突事件。當時一名警官死亡，而一名被指為涉案的青年印染家忿不平遭到逮捕，警方唯一的證物是刊載於《讀賣新聞》早報上的兩張照片，且報導標題是「凶器照片，內容指向松永優打死警官」。但目擊證人指出事實正好相反，而是弟弟青年試圖救助警官。照片不同的解讀，致使中平思考「影像記錄即真實」的預設陷阱，以及攝影與政治之間錯綜複雜的權力結構。中平提出攝影工作者的自覺——「不能像持槍力者的鷹犬。」
10 〈Naked Photography——中平卓馬〉，清水徹著，Art-it網站連載，二〇一一，翻譯：黃亞紀。
11 〈為什麼現在要談中平卓馬〉，森山大道著，《中平卓馬：原點復歸——橫濱》，二〇〇三，翻譯：黃亞紀。

Next page: Nakahira Takuma, 'Untitled', 2005 © Gen Nakahira
Courtesy of Each Modern, Taipei

中平卓馬至今於國際攝影界相對沈寂的原因，一是最初階段作品的缺無，二是一九七〇至一九八〇年代初期創作的斷層，這十年間曾經出現三種情況：

首先是中平在探索攝影理論，越來越少創作影像；其次是因為他一九七二年前往沖繩聲援「松永事件」[9]，拉長了攝影新方向的摸索時間；最後是一九七七年中平遭遇酒精中毒，導致長期記憶與認知喪失。這段期間唯一留下的作品，僅有與篠山紀信合作的《決鬥寫真論》。

諷刺的是，因《決鬥寫真論》的連載與出版，一度為攝影心灰意冷的中平卓馬逐漸燃起創作慾望，卻就在《決鬥寫真論》出版的前日病倒，陷入激烈的精神不安。

中平卓馬在一九八〇年代初期開始，幾乎每天都騎著腳踏車到橫濱、川崎一帶，有時甚至遠到東京拍照，然後如同〈循環〉一般，黃昏時刻進入暗房沖洗、挑選、放相。在這樣重複地檢視自己的視覺之中，中平卓馬不斷感受到獨特的精神震撼，也因而對攝影有了重新的體悟——攝影和所謂的拍攝行為雖僅為社會表面的謄寫，但若將其推到極端（或原點），則有讓社會裸露的機會。

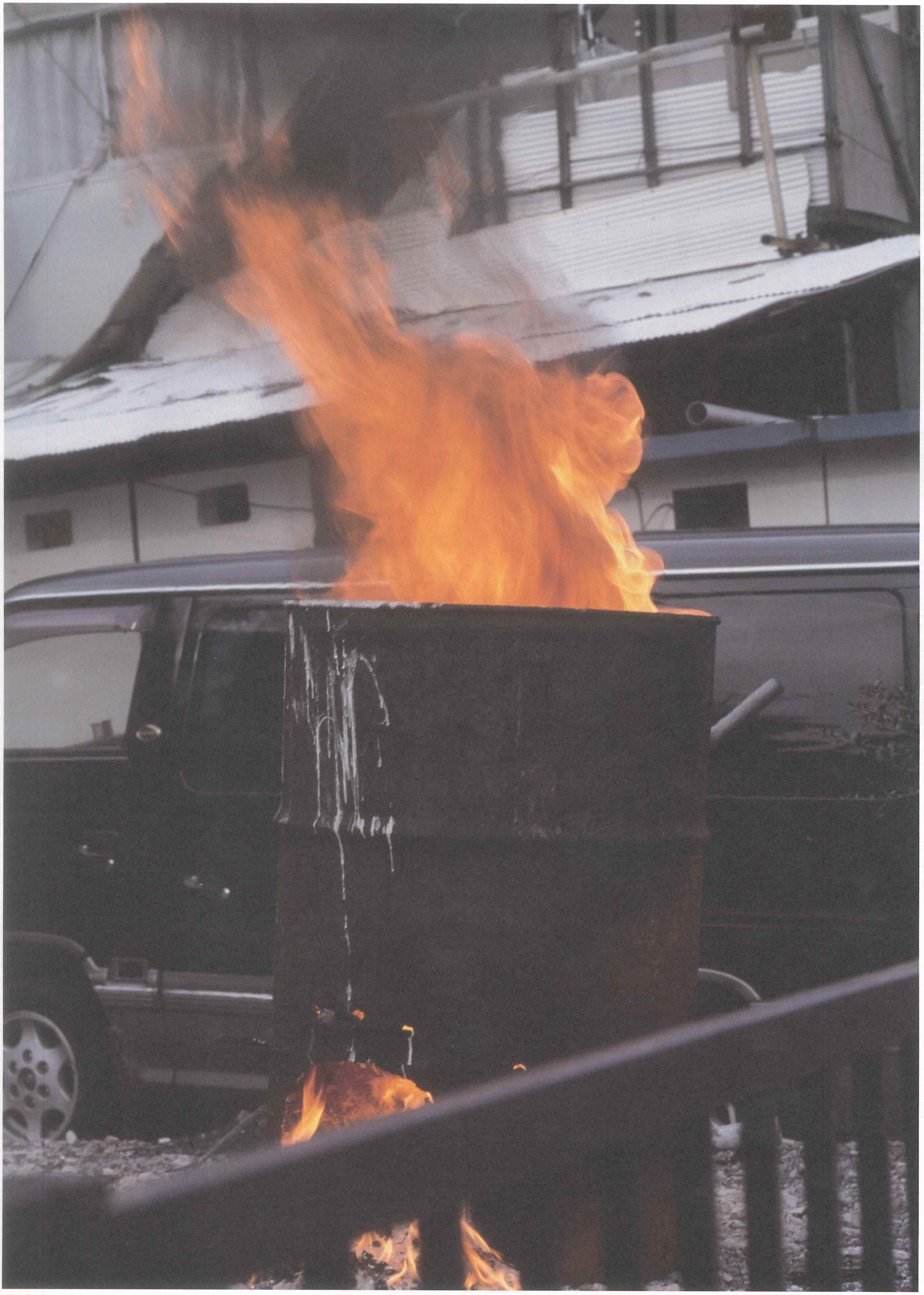
一九八三年出版《嶄新的凝視》顯露了這項轉變。接著《嶄新的凝視》，中平卓馬陸續出版《Adieu à X》（一九八九）《Hysteric Six：中平卓馬》（二〇〇二）數本攝影集，開始嘗試不拘泥於「私」、直接、不帶感情的觀看與拍攝方式，最後發展成直幅的彩色攝影。這些彩色攝影，恐怕是最極致的中平卓馬，也同時是最難以理解的一連串作品。

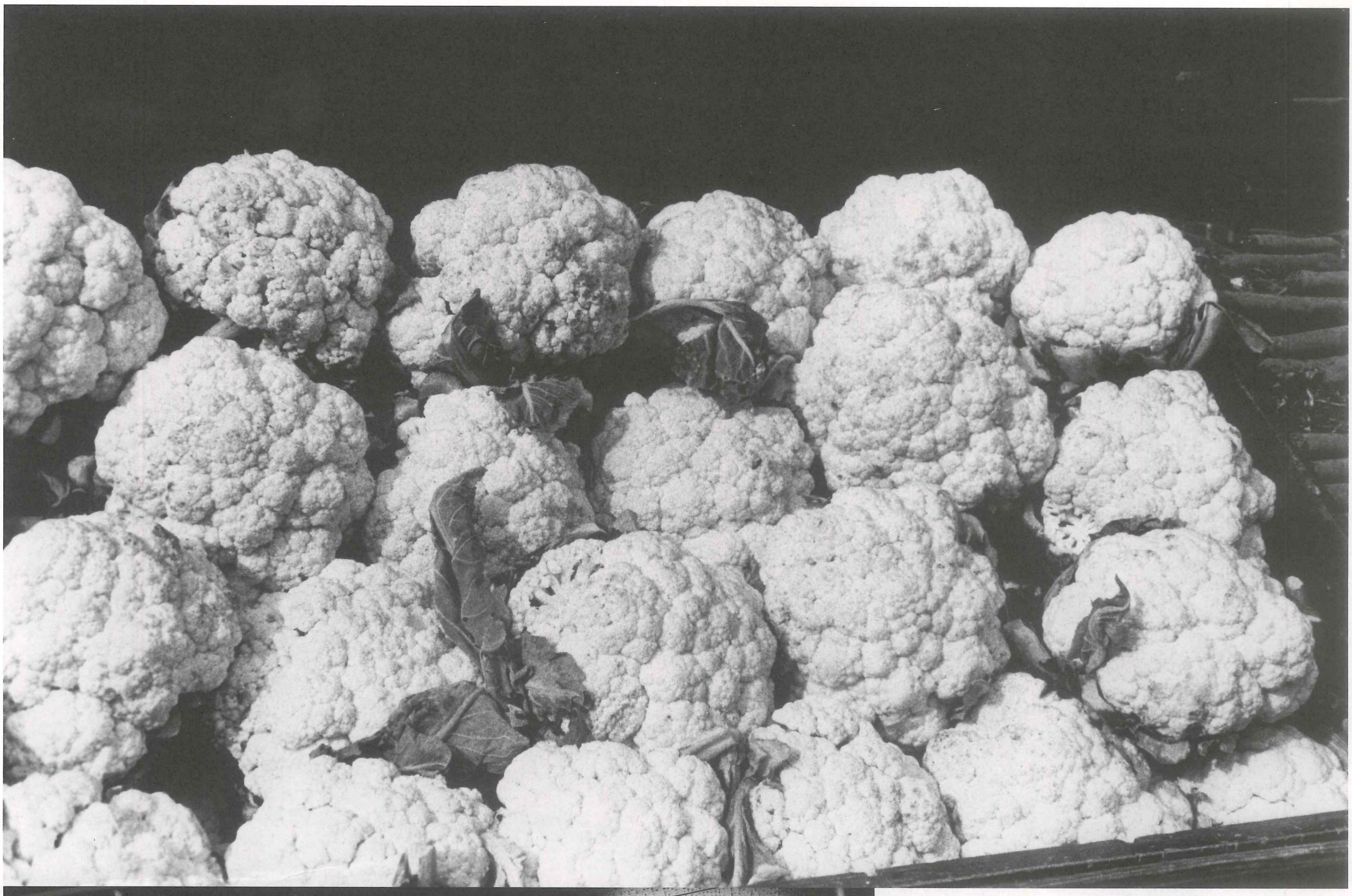
這些彩色攝影不外乎拍攝以下主題：火、水、鳥、獸、樹、花、家、人，都是中平卓馬日常見到的事物，也因此曾有評論家將這樣的中平卓馬歸類為新的「私攝影」。但是，這些不斷重覆出現的事物片段，被一種完全沒有隱喻、沒有修辭、沒有表現的方法拍攝下來，產生似乎可以觸摸的質感，飽滿的色調，強烈的對比，篤定明晰的輪廓，以極端純粹的靜物像成立著。

這和「私攝影」充滿回憶、敘事、情緒的影像完全不同。若單就本質而論，清水徹（Minoru Shimizu）的說法則簡單明白得多：

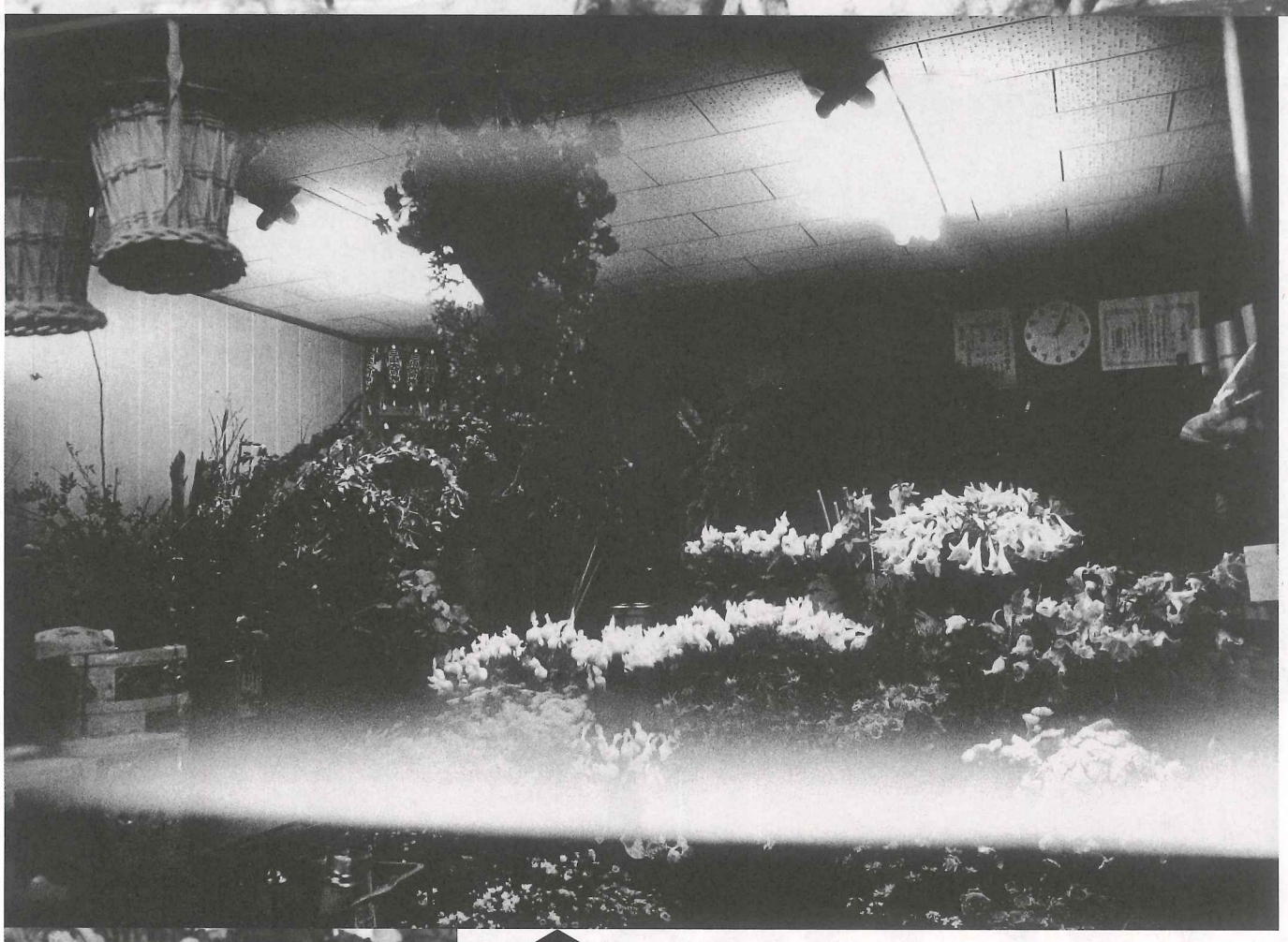
> 所謂的攝影，是把所有普通名詞做固有名詞化，把所有的存在轉換為「此」，而「此」（haecceity，即存在的個體性）中任何存在皆為等價。意即，人類的通常認識是「這是貓」，但攝影的認識則為「貓為此」。而「流浪漢為此」、「鳥為此」——流浪漢與鳥便劃上等號。所以，攝影就是人間性區別的被蒸發，只剩純粹等價的「此」且反覆存在的世界。
>
> 攝影的世界是瘋狂的世界。中平卓馬是最純粹攝影的人。他的作品指出攝影的「原點」，即單以固有名詞的「此」和等價性一中平卓馬的攝影會讓那些汲汲營營為作品取名字、講道理的多數攝影家感到羞愧。[10]

若就脈絡而論，森山大道認為中平卓馬從此從外界所賦予的繁雜桎梏中解放，抵達他一個人的聖域：

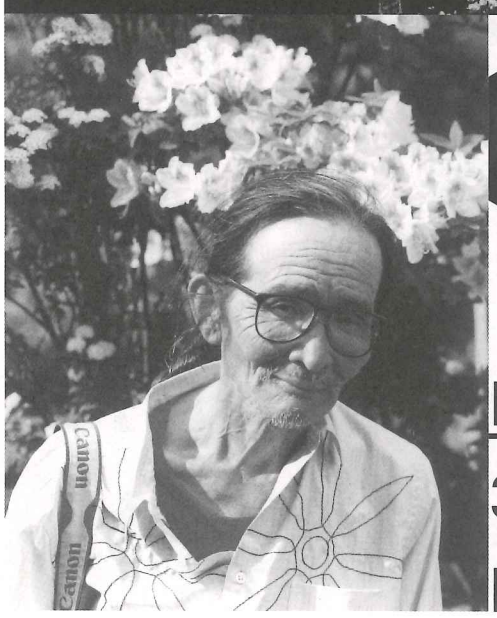




Nakahira Takuma, 'Circulation: Date, Place, Events', 1971 © Gen Nakahira / Courtesy of Each Modern, Taipei



Nakahira Takuma, 'For a Language to Come', 1970 © Gen Nakahira / Courtesy of Each Modern, Taipei



中平卓馬

HK INTERNATIONAL PHOTO FESTIVAL

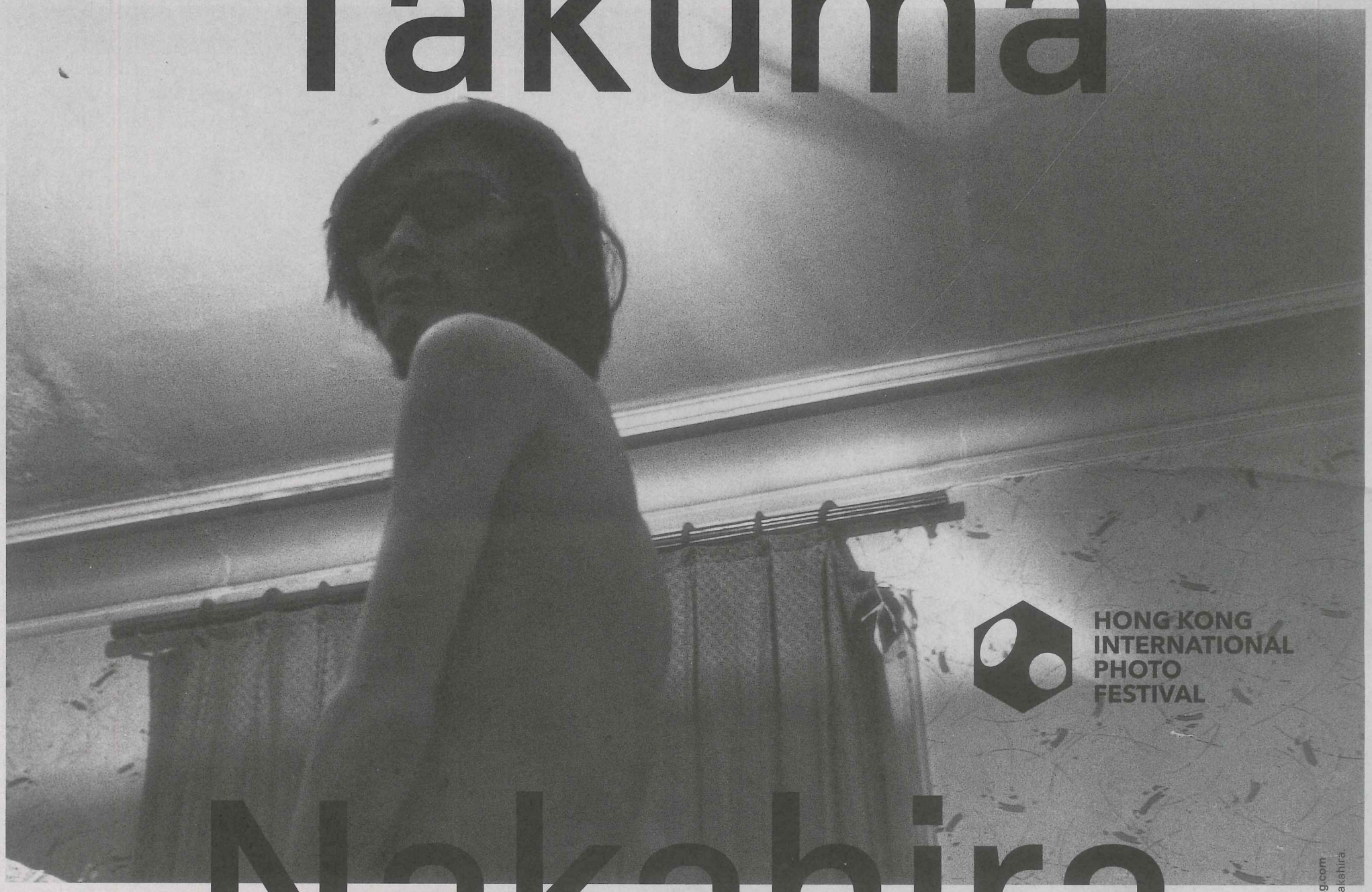
NAKAHIRA TAKUMA Curator: Huang Yaji

3 November–27 November 2018, 12nn–8pm

HART Projects @ H CODE, 45 Pottinger Street, Central

Designed by wangzhihong.com

Nakahira Takuma



HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL PHOTO FESTIVAL

Nakahira Takuma

Art Direction and Designed by Wang Zhi-Hong. http://wangzhihong.com
Nakahira Takuma, *Circulation: Dates, Place, Events*, 1971 © Gen Nakahira
Courtesy of Each Modern Gallery, Taipei

Nakahira Takuma is Nakahira Takuma
July 6, 1938 ——— September 1, 2015

Special Response Exhibition
by Wang Zhi Hong

As Nakahira Takuma proposed in his collection of essays on photography *Why an Illustrated Botanical Dictionary?* that objects are objects: direct, distinct and devoid of emotions. In "Nakahira Takuma is Nakahira Takuma", I return to language to specify the subject. In the name of Nakahira Takuma, everything is presented in a chronological juxtaposition, creating a connection between the work and the audience through the action of turning the pages, and walking the space to view each work of art. Nakahira's life is encapsulated in this booklet and exhibition for all to see. On 1 September 2015, Nakahira has set himself free from the concept of time and entered an eternal circulation: Nakahira Takuma is still Nakahira Takuma.

HONG KONG
INTERNATIONAL
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